

City of Corunna
Regular Council Meeting
Tuesday, February 22, 2000

Present: Billis, Bayless, Bendall, Dumond, Hornus, Ockerman, Runyan.

Absent: None.

Guests: Lisa Hitchcock, City Manager; Judy Horton; Don Runyon; Gene & Shirley Sanderson; Marlene Fick; Doug Albrant; Clark Long; Jackie Leone, The Argus Press; Stephanie Wuttke, The Independent; and other concerned citizens.

The meeting was called to order in the Corunna Middle School Library by Mayor Billis at 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS REGULAR MEETING: Hornus moved, Dumond seconded to approve the minutes of the previous regular meeting as presented.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Ockerman, Dumond, Hornus, Runyan, Bayless, Bendall.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

AGENDA APPROVAL: Dumond moved, Ockerman seconded to approve the agenda with the deletion of Item No. 2) Consider Appointment To The Planning Commission.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Bayless, Runyan, Bendall, Ockerman, Dumond, Hornus.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

APPROVAL OF VENDOR DISBURSEMENTS: Ockerman moved, Hornus seconded to approve the vendor disbursements as presented.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Runyan, Ockerman, Bayless, Hornus, Bendall, Dumond.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CALL TO AUDIENCE: Don Runyon, 563 Cary Street, asked why the city closed Charles Street, which runs off of Ferry Street, but they could not close an alley. Mayor Billis asked when the street was closed. Mr. Runyon advised the street has been closed since he has lived in the city. Mayor Billis advised he suspected it might have depended on who sat on the council at the time the street was closed. Councilperson Dumond stated there might not have been any utilities running in the street like the alley did. Mr. Runyon stated he thought it would be harder to close a street. Councilperson Dumond stated there were utilities running in the alley that council was concerned with.

Councilperson Runyan stated if you look at the original plat of the city from the 1800's, you will find several streets that are on the plat that no one knows about. He further stated the planning commission plans to discuss this situation. He also stated a copy of the original plat is needed in order to know exactly where these streets are located.

CONSIDER APPOINTMENT OF ARMILDA (MILLIE) TAUTE TO THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION (MEMBER-AT-LARGE/CITY RESIDENT), TERM TO EXPIRE DECEMBER 31, 2002: Dumond moved, Hornus seconded to appoint Armilda (Millie) Taute to the Parks & Recreation Commission (Member-at-large/City resident), term to expire December 31, 2002.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Hornus, Bendall, Dumond, Bayless, Ockerman, Runyan.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER BOARD OF REVIEW DATES: Dumond moved, Bendall seconded to approve the following Board of Review dates:

Tuesday, March 7th, 1:00 p.m., Organizational Meeting

Wednesday, March 15, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 22, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Bendall, Bayless, Runyan, Dumond, Hornus, Ockerman.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

CONSIDER LABOR NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE: Councilperson Hornus stated there was discussion some time ago about this committee and he thought everything was settled. Ms. Hitchcock advised there are currently three council members on the labor committee. She asked council who they wanted to negotiate contracts. Mayor Billis stated he wanted to be personally involved in the negotiating process as it goes along so he would never have to apply a veto to anything. Councilperson Bayless suggested letting the department head and the city manager do the preliminary work as they have done before. He stated he believed the procedure worked well in the past. Mayor Billis stated it was his understanding there have been mayors who have served on the labor negotiating committee. Since there is a third spot to fill, he offered to serve on the committee if council had no objections. Ockerman moved, Hornus seconded to appoint Mayor Billis to the Labor Negotiating Committee to replace Cal Hornus.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Dumond, Hornus, Ockerman, Bendall, Runyan, Bayless.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED

Ms. Hitchcock asked who they wanted to negotiate the contracts. Councilperson Bendall advised the city manager and department head would negotiate the union contracts, and the labor negotiating committee would negotiate the department head contracts

CONSIDER BUDGET AMENDMENTS: Councilperson Ockerman stated he is opposed to setting a budget and then amending it six months later. The charter states council can approve budget amendments but he wanted clarification. He further stated any item that is amended has to be voted on. He suggested amending the budget by taking funds from some other item. Councilperson Bendall stated it was her understanding that was what the amendments do. Councilperson Ockerman stated not always, expenditures have increased in the past. Mayor Billis stated the city charter states council can move funds from one department to another, but once a budget is established, you cannot add to it. Mayor Billis then read page 36 of the city charter. Councilperson Dumond asked what should be done with the expenditures that have to be paid. Councilperson Ockerman suggested taking money from other funds. Councilperson Runyan suggested holding another workshop because everyone has different thoughts and interpretations about spending money. He further stated council should sit down and decide which department the funds should come from. Councilperson Ockerman suggested having Ms. Hitchcock take a look at the budget and then make recommendations on where the funds could come from. Councilperson Dumond agreed, and suggested postponing the budget amendments until the next meeting.

CALL TO AUDIENCE: Gene Sanderson complimented Councilpersons Ockerman and Runyan for standing up for the people in Corunna. He stated maybe more people would become involved in the city if they know there are people on the council who are working for the people.

Mayor Billis complimented the entire council for the input and ideas they expressed during the meeting. He stated he felt the council was working together.

Gene Sanderson asked what the city's millage rate is. Councilperson Ockerman advised residents are taxed at 13.76 mills plus an additional five mills for infrastructure. He further advised the millage has been at that amount since 1996. Mr. Sanderson asked if the city could assess another mill. Ms. Hitchcock advised no, the city is at the maximum right now due to the Headlee Amendment. Mr. Sanderson asked if the city could afford to give General Motors or Ford a ten-year tax relief if they wanted to build a new factory in Corunna. Mayor Billis advised he would hope the city could give them a tax relief. Mr. Sanderson asked if the city could afford to do that without raising taxes. Councilperson Ockerman advised taxes cannot be raised any higher. Mr. Sanderson stated the property could be assessed ten times more than it is worth. Ms. Hitchcock advised that could not be done due to the Headlee Amendment. Judy Horton asked how much longer the infrastructure program would continue. When it first began, the residents were told 20 years. Councilperson Ockerman advised the city is five years into the program.

Judy Horton asked how many homes in the city have never received a water and sewer bill. Ms. Hitchcock advised the city keeps looking. Ms. Horton stated after the sewers were put in on Cary Street, she did not get a sewer bill and she wonders how many other homes are not getting billed. Ms. Hitchcock stated she hoped there are no other homes that have this situation. Mayor Billis stated he realizes everyone is tired of the sewer problems and the high water bills. Council recognizes that this is a big problem that needs to be tackled in a big way. He further stated the city needs to solve the infiltration problem, which will allow the city to build more homes. He also stated if the infiltration problem is not fixed today, it would be twice the problem tomorrow. Ms. Horton stated there could be other people in the city who are not paying their fair share.

Marlene Fick asked when the sewer construction would be addressed again. She advised she has not seen any construction going on. Councilperson Dumond advised there would be a construction project started this year around the McArthur Street area. Ms. Fick stated she did not see anything done last year. Ms. Hitchcock advised there was not a project done last year. She further advised the project scheduled for this year was supposed to be done last year but the state funding did not come in until March. She also advised the project has to be done when school is not in session. Ms. Fick asked if this area was determined to be one of the bad areas. Councilperson Dumond advised yes.

ADJOURN: Dumond moved to adjourn.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Ockerman, Dumond, Hornus, Runyan, Bayless, Bendall.

No: None.

Motion CARRIED Time was 8:31 p.m.

DR. JAMES BILLIS, MAYOR

LINDA M. LECUREUX, DEPUTY CLERK